



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

that few saints had submitted to austerities so severe and so numerous as he; his conscience still reminded him of sin, and made him fear that he had not yet performed penances enough to expiate his faults before him "who is of purer eyes than to behold evil." In this state of trouble, he recalled to mind, the peace, the calm which the curé seemed to enjoy while he was with him; and the thought that that peace of mind was, perhaps, the fruit of his new religious convictions, gained strength in his mind. In the prospect of death, people care little for the opinion of the world, which they care so much for in the time of health: the bishop, therefore, sent for his nephew, and told him that he desired to converse with him on serious subjects. The curé came to the dying man. When the bishop saw him enter, he said—"You are welcome; take a seat, and let them leave us alone for a few minutes." When all had withdrawn, the curé, after closing the door, sat down by the bed of his uncle, who said, in a sad and solemn voice—"My dear friend, I have no time to lose, and therefore, without any disguise, I come to the point at once. You know my life, you know that I have acquitted myself, and scrupulously, in the duties of my religion, and yet, I confess, in the prospect of appearing before God, even after having received the holy sacrament for the last time, I tremble at the thought of presenting myself at the tribunal of my Judge! Some overpowering voice within me tells me, that I am not ready to appear, and I feel I do not enjoy in my dying hour, that Christian calmness which can see death approach without fear, and even welcome it with joy. I have observed in you, my dear brother, this precious peace, and even when harrassing you for your doctrines, I was internally struck by the composure which they produced in your soul. Oh! tell me quickly I entreat of you—how did you obtain it?"

"I can tell you," replied the curé, "for I have been myself in the state of mind in which I now find you. In examining my life, I discovered each day new imperfections: the more I tried to live holily, the more I felt sin weigh on my conscience. If I performed a good action in the eyes of the world, I felt that it was bad in the sight of God, because vanity or pride had always some share in it. If I forced myself to make a resolution in the sight of God, at the moment when I was deciding to do good, I found some interested motive also urging me to it, and thus polluting it. Finally, I came to hate myself. I held life in horror, and what increased my terrors was, that I found, in reading my Bible, such declarations as these: 'The wages of sin is death!' 'Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them!' 'Whosoever shall have kept the whole law, and yet have offended in one point, is guilty of the whole.' One day, I thought I should lose my senses, and in despair I cast myself on my knees, striking my breast, and exclaiming, O my God! take pity on me, I am a great sinner; what must I do, what must I do to be saved? I rose, and opening my Bible, I cast my eyes on it, and there I found the very words I had just uttered, 'What must I do to be saved?' Struck by this coincidence I hastened to read the words which followed. It was precisely the reply to my question, thus—'BELIEVE IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED.' Believe, and thou shalt be saved, said I. What! it is sufficient to believe! I thought I must have misunderstood, I re-read these words, and I found again and again, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.' In order to throw light on this thought, I looked at other passages in my Bible, which treated of the same subject, and which were indicated by references. I found a great number of which the sense always was, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, thy sins shall be pardoned, and thou shalt receive eternal life.' I confess, however, that this faith which was required of me, this salvation so freely offered me, all this was at first in my head, without reaching my heart, when one day the words of the Gospel, 'BY GRACE ARE YE SAVED,' fell like light into the depth of my soul. Grace! oh! now I understand, cried I; I was condemned to hell, like a felon to the scaffold, and when ready to perish, my King sends me a pardon. I understand—I owed my Master a heavy debt of sins, and my God has cancelled them. I owe it to his grace. Now I understand this word. How sweet it is, how powerful to chase from my heart all fear! Now, whether I die or live, I am saved! What love my God has shown for me; and now that I am saved by his grace, what love I must have for him. How delightful to do his will! How willingly will I sacrifice myself to his service and to the good of my brethren, who know not yet what this grace is—the pardon, the love of God. Grace! this word encompassed all my soul, and since then an ever-increasing peace has spread itself through my heart. I experienced the reality of that promise of Jesus, 'My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.'—John xiv. Since then I have known no greater happiness than labouring to do the will of my God. Without doubt, I still fall into sin frequently, but I never rise without trembling; and without gaining even from those falls, new strength by which to stand firm for the future. Since that time, I have been full

of an ardent desire to make known this good news to my brethren; and I am happy, indescribably happy, when I see my words fall on a heart well prepared, and another soul escape hell by turning to the Saviour."

"But, my dear brother," interrupted the bishop, moved by these words of fire, "who guarantees you that that assurance of your salvation which you believe you experience, is truly a reality, ratified in heaven by God himself, and that it is not purely the fruit of your imagination?"

"I have, as a guarantee, the witness of the Holy Spirit which I bear in my heart, and which made St. Paul say, 'That the Spirit of God witnesseth with his spirit, that he was adopted of God.' I know that the world may tell me that this is also the fruits of my imagination. But what matters it what the world says and thinks? It is sufficient for me, to feel it is otherwise. I say to all, ask God for his Spirit to enlighten you, and you will obtain it to sanctify you. If people put my counsel in practice, they soon find the truth of it, and I thank God for it. If they believe me not and mock me, I am not the less assured of my salvation. I pray for the unbeliever, and I always hope for him: I know that God can convert him, even at the last hour. Yes, my dear uncle, it is not in yourself that you must look for your salvation—your works, always imperfect, can never give you security. You need a Saviour, powerful, perfect, holy; you need Jesus Christ the Son of God, God manifest in the flesh. It is only with such a support, that you will no longer fear to fall, and such an advocate with God, that you will be assured from condemnation." During the following days, the two friends had several other conversations. The bishop grew weaker and weaker, but at the same time his soul seemed to gain new strength; he listened much more than he spoke. He made his nephew read to him different parts of the New Testament, amongst others the Epistle to the Romans and that to the Galatians. At length, one Sunday evening as his nephew, kneeling at the foot of his bed, concluded a prayer in these words—"My God, we look not to ourselves, nor to our works, but solely to Jesus Christ to save us"—The bishop raised his eyes to heaven, and pronouncing these words: "Amen, Lord, amen," he breathed forth his last sigh.

ROUSSELL.

THE BLESSING OF LITERATURE.

Many who have not the advantage of wealth or high standing in society, are apt to repine at their situation—to regret that they are debarred from much refined and intellectual intercourse; but this deprivation is in a great measure ideal; there is an intercourse far more intelligent than that of any living society whatever—the great commonwealth of letters—which knows no distinction of persons, admits of no adventitious superiority, where everything is rated at its real value, and reduced to its legitimate standard. Whatever may have been the rank of authors, the wealth or consequence attaching to their living persons, they exact no further homage; they are entertained without expense, dismissed without ceremony; they are at once our preceptors, masters, servants, they come or go at our bidding; they speak or are dumb at our pleasure. We open the book, its eloquence streams upon us; we close the leaves, it is instantly sealed in silence. We have the best thoughts of the best men in the best possible form; we benefit by a close communion with great and shining characters, without being annoyed by their foibles and eccentricities which appear to be more particularly inherent in genius. Had we lived in the same time, and possessed the intimacy of Dr. Johnson, we should have been shocked to find that, with all his intelligence and strength of mind, he was contracted in principle, insolent and overbearing in argument. We should have blushed for the tarnished honour of our common nature, to think that so great a mind as Addison's could have been meanly jealous of contemporary worth. And, as we all know, poor Goldsmith, amidst innumerable follies and foibles, was so great a glutton of praise that he considered the applause bestowed upon a rope-dancer unjustly diverted from himself; and, in the presence of Dr. Johnson and several others, actually broke his shins in a clumsy attempt to prove he could surpass him. In books are treasured up the maturest fruits of the greatest and most cultivated minds; they contain the pure and condensed intelligence of the human mind, without any proportionate alloy of its passions and weaknesses. Thus the noblest conceptions of our nature are preserved in the odours of language, as formerly the bodies of the great and noble were embalmed in perfumes. In reading history, for instance, we participate in the actions of the illustrious dead, and exchange with pleasure the dull monotony of our own existence for the glorious achievements and enthusiasm of theirs. Under the pen of the historian, the events of time undergo a refining and condensing process; he retains all that is worth preserving, the kernel, without the husks or shell. We thus engage in war without the peril of a wound, and accompany the voyager without encountering the dangers of the seas.—*Professor Calvert's Lecture on Reading, delivered in the Mechanics' Institution, Liverpool.*

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We beg to acknowledge the communication of "Catholicus," bearing the post-mark of Kingstown. We have only been prevented by press of matter from already redeeming our pledge respecting the reply to His Grace the Archbishop of Dublin's essay, entitled "The Search after Infallibility," which appeared in our first and second numbers. The subject is one of the greatest importance; and "Catholicus" will not find that we shall shrink from the fullest discussion of both sides of the question.

We have received a letter in reply to the Rev. W. Carson of Waterford from the Rev. R. A. Wilson of Glasgow, the great length of which rendered it impossible to insert it in our present number; also several other communications which we are obliged to omit for want of space. We would earnestly request all our valued contributors, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, to limit the length of their communications, so as not only to prevent disappointment to themselves, but increase the facility of insertion in a periodical so limited in space as the CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

All letters to be addressed to the Editor, 9, Upper Sackville-st.

No anonymous letter can be attended to. Whatever is sent for insertion must be authenticated by the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee for his good faith.

Subscriptions are earnestly solicited, which our friends will observe are payable in advance. The amount may be forwarded either in postage stamps or a post-office order, payable to Mr. Wm. Curry, Upper Sackville-street, Dublin.

Contributors of £1 per annum will be furnished with six copies, any of which will be forwarded, as directed, to nominees of the subscriber. Any one receiving any number of the journal which has not been paid for or ordered by himself, will not be charged for it, and may assume that it has been paid for by a subscriber.

The Catholic Layman.

DUBLIN, JUNE, 1852.

ON THE USE OF THE FATHERS.

THE number of letters which have already been written to this journal by Roman Catholics is a fact not only gratifying to ourselves, but important, as showing that educated and intelligent Roman Catholic laymen are sensible of the necessity of discussion, and that they are disposed to enter upon it with those who come forward to discuss in a fair and candid manner. We conceive it to be our duty to endeavour, calmly and reasonably, to lead this discussion into the most useful and practical direction, by appealing to men's reason and sober judgment.

It has struck us rather forcibly, that while our Roman Catholic correspondents do generally profess to be men of humble station and without learning, they show a much greater readiness to appeal to "the Fathers" than to the words of Christ, and the teaching of his Apostles. We, therefore, think it right to call attention to "the use of the Fathers," and we entreat our Roman Catholic readers to give a candid consideration to what we have to say. We must be brief; but we will endeavour to give a brief illustration, which may throw some light on the subject.

We are sure that none of our readers will say that the Fathers knew the truth better than Christ or the inspired Apostles. All Roman Catholics admit that every one of the Fathers was liable to fall into error, while the Apostles were divinely secured from all error. Is it safer or better to appeal to those who may err, or to those who cannot err?

The utmost that can be said is, that we may understand the Fathers better than the Scripture, and learn more easily from them. And this we will examine.

We have a vast collection of books, written by bishops, clergy, and Catholic laymen, of the first twelve centuries. All these commonly go under the name of "the Fathers." A man of great